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ABSTRACT

The Rotterdam City Council's Project "Education and Social Environment" was established to improve the educational environment for disadvantaged children in two working class neighborhoods in Rotterdam, Netherlands. First, the problems of educationally disadvantaged children are discussed. Next, the planning, organizational, and developmental activities of the project are presented. A time schedule and description of component programs in academic subject areas, parent and adult education, and social and affective development are also included. The project is said to emphasize the development of the total child within the regular school environment. (JCD)

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THE PROJECT ONDERWIJS EN SOCIAAL MILIEU

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THE PROJECT ONDERWIJS EN SOCIAAL MILIEU

1. what it is all about

In 1969 the project 'Education and Social Environment' ('Onderwijs en Sociaal Milieu', abbreviated to O.S.M.) was started in two neighbourhoods of the city of Rotterdam under the responsibility of the City Counsil.
The two neighbourhoods involved are inhabited mainly by working class people of limited education.
The project tries to help children from these underprivileged and socially deprived families by widening their opportunities for development through a schooling which creates educational situations suited to their needs. We do this by helping and training teachers to work with new educational programmes, by joining efforts with parents and by collaborating with neighbourhood organizations.
The following data will illustrate some of the obstacles that stand in the way of full development of the abilities of children from socially deprived groups:

a. 65% of children from these underprivileged areas go to lower vocational training schools (4 year course), whereas the national ratio is 38%.
   Only 35% of these children enter schools for general secondary education (4, 5 or 6 years course), the national ratio being 62%.
b. the proportion of children repeating a class is twice the national percentage.
c. in nearly all Rotterdam schools children in the top class of primary school (6th grade) take standard exams = the average score in the areas concerned is always under the 50th percentile, i.e. a class usually scores with the lower 50%.
d. in these areas the number of children who go to schools for special education is higher than the national average.

The O.S.M. project was set up to better educational conditions, to solve the problems and change the effects just mentioned.

In recent years many families of foreign workers, mainly from Mediterranean countries, have settled in the project areas. Since then, educational facilities for these children have also become the concern of our project.

Why is it that children from socially deprived groups do not fully develop their faculties and talents? What are the long-term consequences of this?

These children do not reach their full potential because school education is not adapted to their needs, that is, to their ways of learning. Among other signs this is manifested in teacher behaviour: teachers often do not know how to cope with their pupils' need for well structured education because they lack the appropriate means (special programmes, etc.). Moreover, the teacher-child relationship often presents problems.

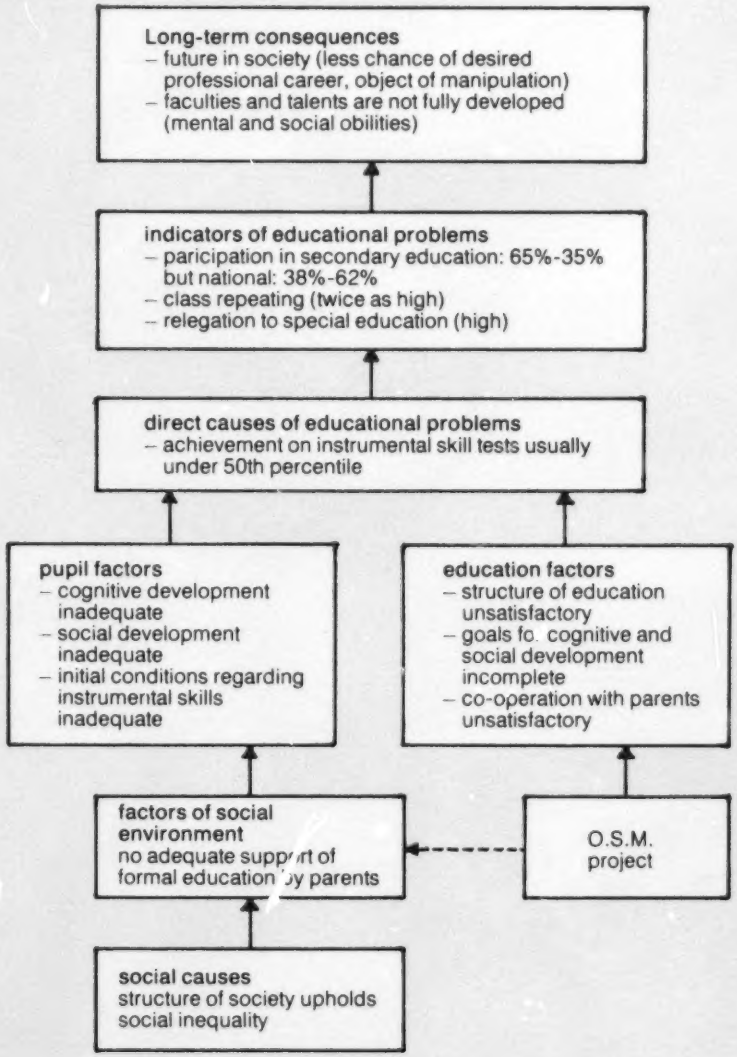
Research has shown that both the cognitive development of pupils, i.e. thought processes and language use, and their socio-emotional development do not come up to the standard that makes for reasonable success at reading, writing and arithmetic (the 3 R's).
On entering primary school children often cannot fulfill initial conditions for following these subjects of the curriculum.
It seems that – on the whole – parents are not able to support their children in their school careers, at least their efforts are not succesful.
Sometimes there is hardly any contact between parents and school, let alone any co-operation between the two.
Moreover, there are many reasons why parents cannot give adequate help and support to their childrens' formal education, e.g. because they themselves have had little schooling, or because they have no room to sit down and quietly talk over homework and school problems with their children. The continued existence of social inequalities is the background of these problems. Every social group has its own educational style and its own way of supporting a childs' formal education. But, as we have seen, the methods that parents from socially deprived groups use are not very succesful.

The long-term consequences of not being successful at school are many:
1) talents that should normally have been developed through formal education do not find full scope;
2) there is a smaller chance of entering the occupation of one's choice;
3) one more easily becomes an object of manipulation, etc.

In fig. 1 we have summarized these problems and their causes.

In our view it is unjust that the social environment you were born and raised in should be an impediment. That is why the O.S.M. project tries to develop a programme that will help children from underprivileged families overcome their problems and find a full scope for their talents in regular schooling.

fig. 1
problem analysis
in brief


Long-term consequences
– future in society (less chance of desired professional career, object of manipulation)
– faculties and talents are not fully developed (mental and social obilities)
indicators of educational problems
– paricipation in secondary education: 65%-35% but national: 38%-62%
– class repeating (twice as high)
– relegation to special education (high)
direct causes of educational problems
– achievement on instrumental skill tests usually under 50th percentile
pupil factors
– cognitive development inadequate
– social development inadequate
– initial conditions regarding instrumental skills inadequate
education factors
– structure of education unsatisfactory
– goals fo. cognitive and social development incomplete
– co-operation with parents unsatisfactory
factors of social environment
no adequate suppo.rt of formal educatio.oy parents
O.S.M. project
social causes
structure of society upholds social inequality

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2. putting together a programme package

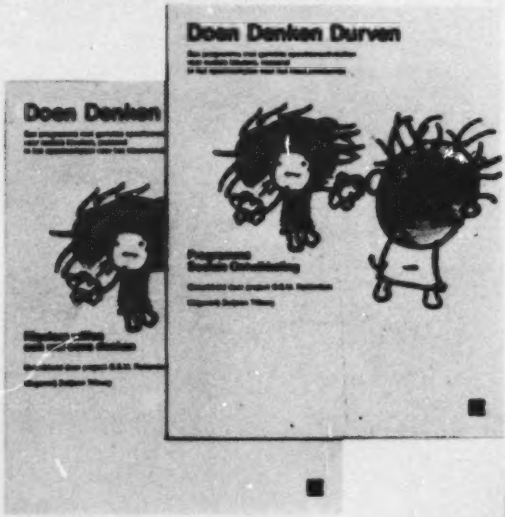
The task of the O.S.M. project is to devise a set of programmes that will help to reduce the educational problems of children from socially deprived groups. It is, of course, necessary to find out whether or not the intended goals are reached, whether children really do get more opportunities to unfold their talents.
So the project also develops evaluation techniques.

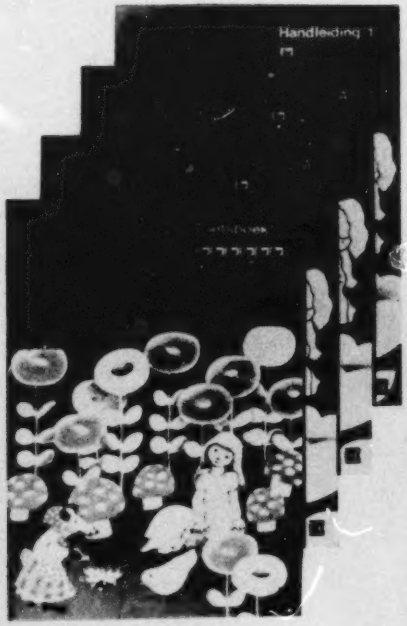
In making up our programmes we try to get to the root of the educational problems (see fig. 1) and work from there.
This has resulted in setting up the following kinds of programmes:

- **educational programmes**
  aim at promoting the cognitive and socio-emotional development of pupils, at improving language, reading, and arithmetic programmes, and at reducing problems in the teacher – child relationship;
- **parent programmes and neighbourhood programmes**
  try to get parents involved in their childrens' schooling and to create conditions favourable to parent involvement and participation;
- **implementation programmes**
  guide and train teachers who are going to work with new programmes.

These components lead to the programme structure shown in figure 2.

DOING, THINKING, DARING





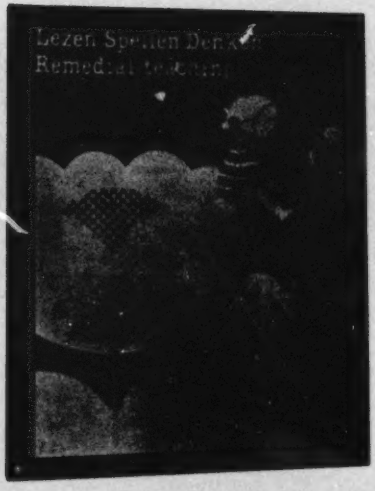
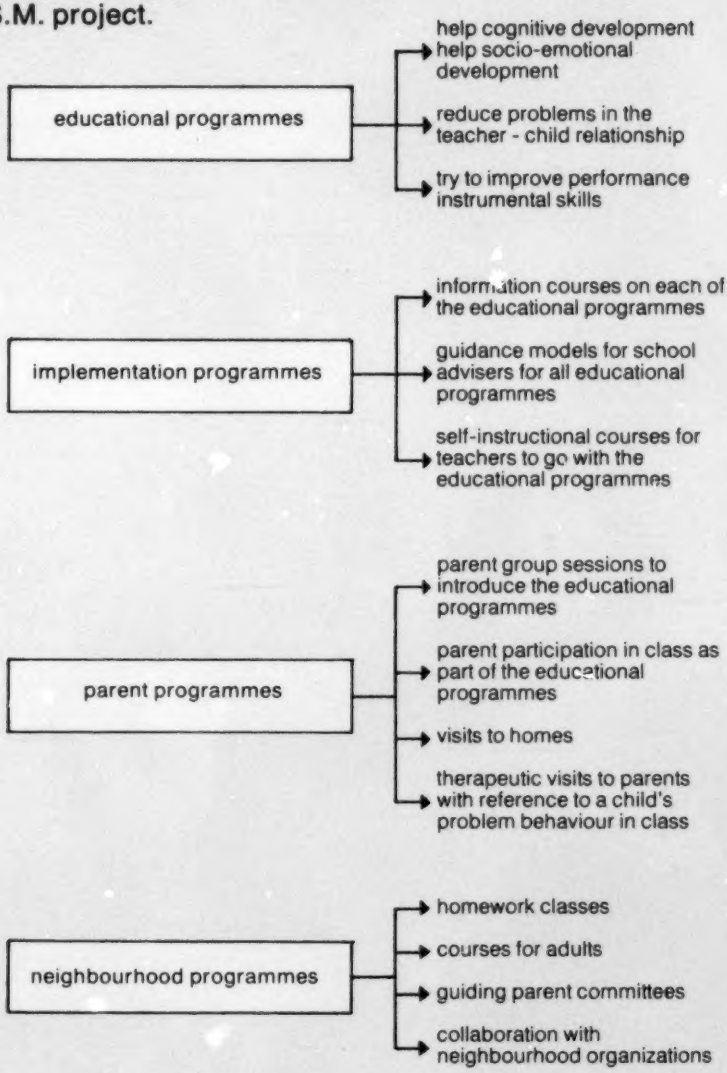
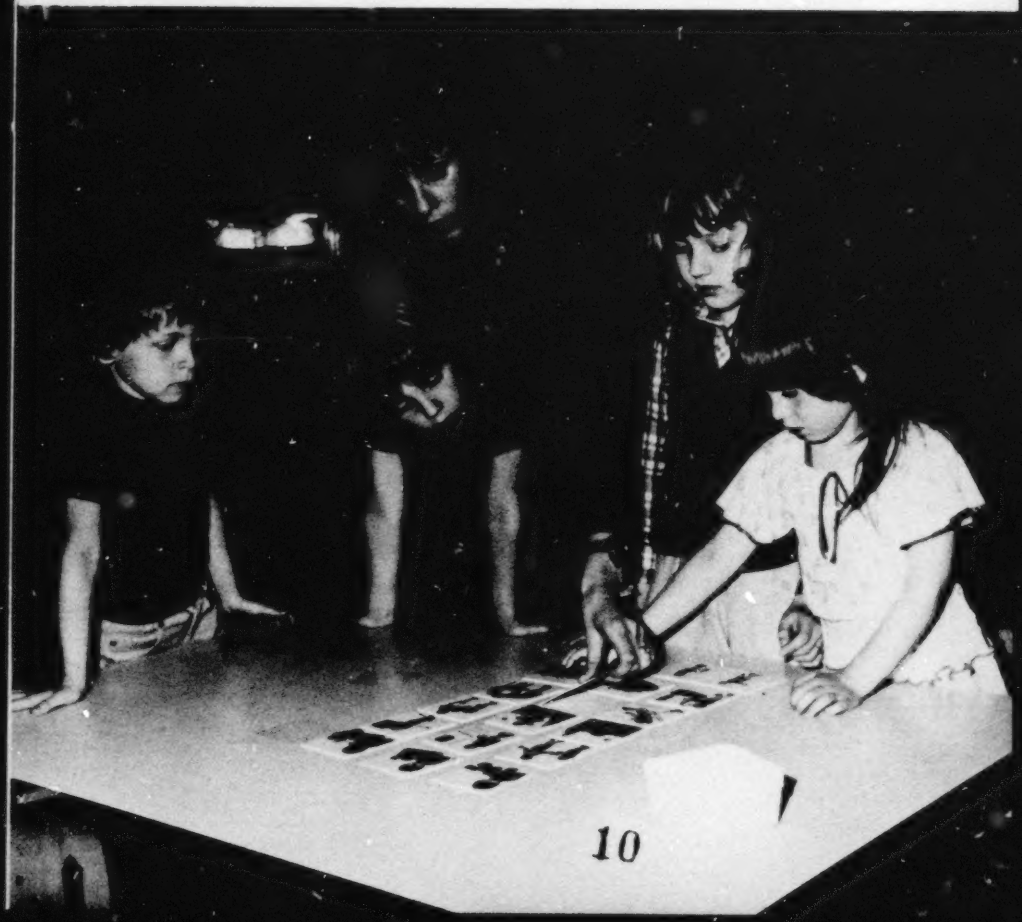


fig. 2
programmatic structure
of the O.S.M. project.


educational programmes
help cognitive development
help socio-emotional development
reduce problems in the teacher - child relationship
try to improve performance instrumental skills
implementation programmes
information courses on each of the educational programmes
guidance models for school advisers for all educational programmes
self-instructional courses for teachers to go with the educational programmes
parent programmes
parent group sessions to introduce the educational programmes
parent participation in class as part of the educational programmes
visits to homes
therapeutic visits to parents with reference to a child's problem behaviour in class
neighbourhood programmes
homework classes
courses for adults
guiding parent committees
collaboration with neighbourhood organizations



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3. time planning and methods

Fig. 3 gives the dates when the various programmes will be completed.
As from those dates programmes will be available for use in project schools. The next section gives short descriptions of all these programmes.

Programmes are developed on the basis of research data and scientific theories on learning and teaching. A new programme is first tried out in a few test classes. The pupils are tested and observed and the teachers are asked to give their opinions on the programme. Next the programme is revised and tried out again. It is not until a programme has been revised a second time that it is presented to project schools. Other schools and advisory services may use our programmes if they wish to do so.
Participation groups give teachers from project schools a say in what is to become part of the programmes.
Evaluation takes place in the normal school situation, for it would be undesirable to create unnatural experimental situations. Modern methods of analysis are used in class.

fig. 3 Time table

Programmes	Products. educational progr.	remedial teaching progr.	parent group sessions	visits to parents	parent participation in class	information course	guidance model	self instructional course
Nursery school (4-6) and primary school (6-12)								
Child thought n.s.	1977		1977	1977	1977	1978	1978	1978
Social development programme n.s.	1977		1977	1977	1977	1978	1978	1978
1st grade	1978					1978	1978	1978
2nd ,,	1979					1980	1980	1980
3rd ,,	1980					1981	1981	1981
4th ,,	1980					1981	1981	1981
5th ,,	1980					1981	1981	1981
6th ,,	1980					1981	1981	1981
Problem behaviour at school n.s.	1978		1977	1978		1978	1978	1978
1st grade	1979			1978		1979	1979	1979
2nd ,,	1979			1978		1079	1979	1979
3rd ,,	1980			1978		1980	1980	1980
4th ,,	1980			1978		1980	1980	1980
5th ,,	1980			1978		1980	1980	1980
6th ,,	1980			1978		1980	1980	1980
Reading, Spelling, Thinking. 1st grade	1976	1976	1976		1976	1978	1978	1978
2nd ,,	1979		1979		1979	1980	1980	1980
3rd ,,	1980		1980		1980	1981	1981	1981
4th ,,	1981		1981		1981	1982	1982	1982
5th ,,	1982		1982		1982	1983	1983	1983
6th ,,	1983		1983		1983	1984	1984	1984
Mathematics and Arithmetic. 1st grade	1979	1979	1979		1979	1979	1980	1980
2nd ,,	1980		1980		1980	1980	1981	1981
3rd ,,	1981		1981		1981	1981	1982	1982
4th ,,	1982		1982		1982	1982	1983	1983
5th ,,	1983		1983		1983	1983	1984	1984
6th ,,	1984		1984		1984	1984	1985	1985
Entering Secondary School	1985		1985	1985		1985		
Other programmes								
Adult education	1976							
Collabaration with neighbourhood organizations		open – ended programme						
Parent committees	1978							

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4. short descriptions of our programmes

This section gives an account of the programmes mentioned in the timetable:

1. Child thought.
2. Social development.
3. Problem behaviour at school.
4. Reading, Spelling, Thinking.
5. Mathematics and arithmetic.
6. Entering secondary school.
7. Adult education.
8. Collaboration with neighbourhood organizations.
9. Parent committees.

It is clear from the timetable that some of the programmes will take a long time to develop and will not be completed for some time. In the meantime other programmes are being used, as follow:

10. Technical reading.
11. Reading with understanding.
12. Spelling.
13. The use of alphabetically ordered sources of information.
14. Reading for study.
15. Dramatic expression.
16. Speech therapy.

Recently the project has also taken up devising programmes for children from immigrant families, i.e. children of foreign workers from the Mediterranean countries. In making up these programmes the project collaborates with the Rotterdam School Adivisory Service.

17. Programmes for children of foreign workers.

Summaries of the programmes that have been completed are available at cost price (in Dutch only).

4.1. child thought (KWOWED).

The acronym is derived from initial letters of the Dutch title. It comprises:
- educational programmes mainley for 5/6 year olds, to be integrated into the "work and play plan" for nursery schools;
- implementation programmes (information course, guidance model, self-instructional course);
- Parent programmes (parent group sessions, visiting, parent participation in class).

Each of these three programmes in its own way promotes cognitive development, and the development of reading and arithmetic.
The child thought programme aim at three things:
- stimulation of cognitive development; i.e. development of thought and language;
- development of conditions for reading;
- development of conditions for arithmetic (calculation).

The well-known psychologist Jean Piaget gathered a lot of information on how to promote the cognitive development of children. Our programme uses many of these ideas. Through play activities, through making discoveries and expressing themselves, young children learn the basics of thinking and of verbal expression.

Certain reading and arithmetic conditions must be fulfilled when a child enters primary school. Programmes in first grade link up with these conditions for reading and arithmetic, and make further use of the activities for developing thought. In this way there is continuity of content between nursery school and primary school programmes.

The nursery school programme consists of a series of worked-out play/learn situations (play activities), and suggestions for planning and integrating the programme into the work and play plan. It also gives a number of pedagogical suggestions. This programme is organized in such a way that it is easy to combine with the Social Development Programme (4.2.). The pedagogical suggestions about planning, integration into 'work and play plan', observation, etc. correspond, and the structure and lay-out of the two programmes are much alike.

The programme includes all sorts of activities that participating parents can do in class with a group of children. It also includes suggestions for giving information to these parents. Moreover, a programme for eight parent group sessions is available. At these sessions parents are told about the child thought programme at school and about the ways in which they can support these activities at home. Sometimes a group of children will demonstrate what they have learned. With the teacher, parents go over the games they can play at home with their children.
Parents who are not able to come to these sessions are visited at home, if they wish, and there the same things are discussed.

The implementation programmes i.e. programmes used to guide teachers, are composed of the usual three elements. The information course gives general information on the child thought programme. Nursery school teachers receive a work-book with summaries and ideas from the programme they can try out in class. The results are discussed at the next session. Videotapes and slides are used to show how the programme actually works.
The so-called "guidance model" contains advice for those who help the teachers carry out the programme, the project guidance staff. This covers:

- observation and working with observation checklists;
- planning and integration into the work and play plan;
- pedagogical principles and principles of learning;
- organization and function of team meetings, etc.

The self-instructional course consists of three videotapes and a number of workbooks.

4.2. social development programme (PROSON)

Kinds of programmes:
- educational programmes for 5/6 year-olds up to, and including, 6th graders (11/12 year-olds);
- implementation programmes (information course, guidance model, self-instructional course);
- parent programmes (parent group sessions, visiting, parent participation).

The general goal of the social development programme is to promote a childs ability to survey a social situation, taking into account its own point of view, perspective, etc. and that of others; and choosing, consciously or unconsciously, a line of behaviour best suited to the situation and the partners involved in the interaction.
Role-playing ability and competence in communicating are very important here. The programme deals with specific role-playing skills and verbal, as well as non-verbal skills, in meaningful social, communicative situations.

At the moment the programme for the 5/6 year-olds has been completed. Here we start actively to promote the above mentioned abilities and skills at a level suited to the development of children in the project schools.

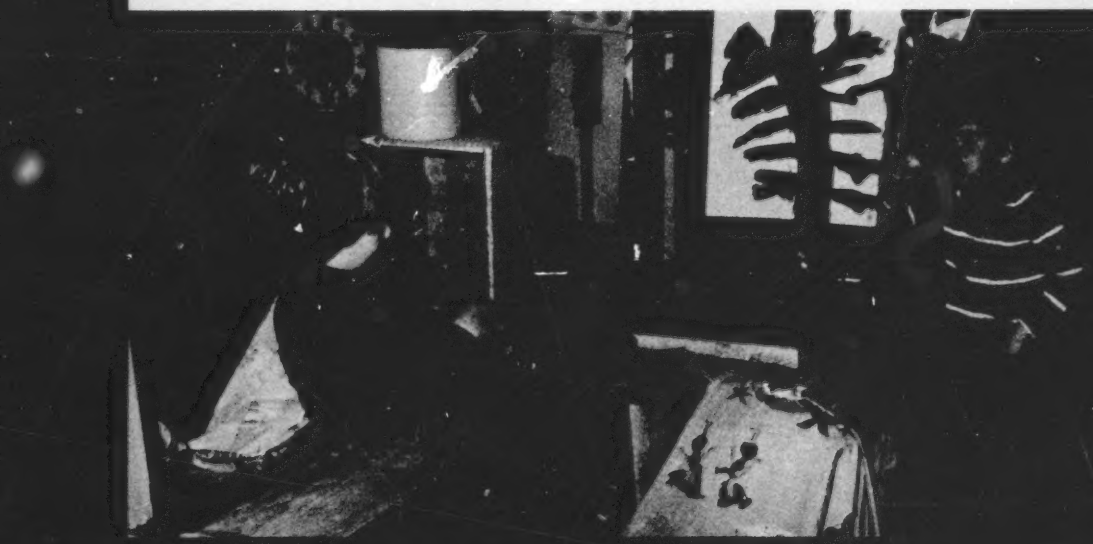
The nursery school programme consists of a series of worked-out play-learn situations (play activities), suggestions for planning and integration of the programme into the work and play plan, and a number of pedagogical suggestions. Play activities are grouped around four programme elements: symbolic play; active language use; role-playing; and interaction.

Symbolic play bridges individual (symbolic) play – as described by Jean Piaget – and the play-learn situations in the rest of the nursery school curriculum where socio-drama is used. Moreover, this playing as such promotes the development of role-taking skills and communicative competence.

The active language use section stresses a certain number of communicative language skills, such as adapting language to situations and listeners.
In role-playing a young child will learn identify the spatial, emotional, motivational and conceptual points of view of others, and to compare these with his own.

In the interaction secton 5/6 year-olds are enabled to experience and to discuss the fact that certain (problem) situations may have so many aspects that it is possible to react to them in more ways than one. They will also find out that whatever line of behaviour one takes, there will be several consequences.

Though the subject matter of the social development programme is different, the function and structure of the parent programme and implementation programme are the same as in the child thought programme.



4.3. problem behaviour at school

Kinds of programmes:
- educational programmes for 4 year-olds up to 6th graders (11/12 year-olds);
- parent programmes (parent group sessions for parents of pre-schoolchildren, 4, 5, 6 year-olds, therapeutic visits by education consultants);
- implementation programmes (information/training course, guidance model).

Every teacher is faced, at times, with children who show some kind of problem behaviour in class that will disturb the teacher-child relationship.
Exemples of this are children with overt aggressive behaviour, those who are over-active and lack concentration but also children who are quiet and withdrawn, not mixing with their class mates. The project is developing a programme especially aimed at helping these children. With the use of ideas from the modern field of the psychology of behavioural change, teachers are advised on how to help these children. The programme will be built around an information/training course for teachers. Where teachers will be introduced to the latest discoveries of psychology in the field of behavioural change, and will be able to test out what they have learned in their own practical situation, i.e. in class.
But children do not only show problem behaviour at school, they may have the same or similar problems at home. The project has developed a method whereby education consultants help parents to solve these problems, and in this way there is a jount approach by the school and by the home (this programme for therapeutic visiting is called 'Problem behaviour in the Family'). Especially for the parents of young children (4 to 6) we have developed a programme of parent group sessions to give information to parents about child development and education. For the problem behaviour at school (POS) programme we have developed a special 4-stage guidance model: psychologist – school adviser – teacher – pupil. For the benefit of school advisers a special information/training-course is being developed.

4.4. reading, spelling, thinking

Kinds of programmes:
- educational programmes (1st grade up to and including 6th grade);
- remedial teaching programmes (1st grade);
- parent programmes (parent group sessions, parent participation in class);
- implementation programmes (information course, guidance model, selfinstructional course).

For the programme "Reading, Spelling, Thinking" a series of 1st grade readers was adapted for mastery learning. To this purpose the readers were divided up into units, with a test after every unit. Pupils who have not yet mastered the set task receive repetition tasks. Other pupils work on enrichment tasks.
For these tasks it was necessary to make a lot of new material:
- "do-books" with tasks and reading games;
- "poser-books" with questions on the reading matter;
- dictionaries with accompanying task books;
- supplementary readers;
- nearly all the books frequently used for 1st graders have been analysed and graded according to degree of difficulty in order to make out where they will link up with the reading programme.

Much time is spent on reading comprehension and spelling, the two aspects that tend to be the Cinderellas of the 1st grade.
Of course this programme is in line with the child thought programme (KWOWED) used in nursery school. "Reading, Spelling, Thinking" links up with reading readiness developed there. The other activities from the child thought programme also return, but at a higher level.
For those few children, and indeed there are only a few, who might still have trouble learning to read, there is a remedial teaching programme.
The development of language/reading programmes for the higher grades has only just been started, so not much is known yet about what they will include. But the 2nd grade programme will definitely be closely related to that of the 1st grade. The programme will be based on scientific research data about language use by children from deprived social environments and will be made to agree with the way in which these children learn.
In further developing these programmes we will try to build up systematically the children's language competence. The programmes will also be characterized by new ways of teaching speech and listening and by a different approach to grammar.

In the 1st grade programme there are a number of opportunities for parents to participate in class, such as: helping with the activities and games from the read-and-play-sets, reading with small groups, etc.
There is also a parent group programme on how 1st graders learn to read, as well as extra audio-visual material (such as videotapes and series of slides).

The implementation programmes have the usual three-part structure:
the information course for teachers is made up of a manual, a workbook and audio-visual material (videotapes with recordings of the reading steps);
a guidance model for use by the school advisers who help teachers to work with "Reading, Spelling, Thinking"; and a self-instructional course.
There is a special booth where teachers can acquire on their own the information contained in the course. All information is available on videotapes.
The information course may also be used by teachers' training colleges to inform students about working with this reading method.

4.5. mathematics and arithmetic

Kinds of programmes:
- educational programmes – 1st grade up to and including 6th grade;
- remedial teaching programme 1st grade;
- implementation programmes (information course, guidance model, selfinstructional course);
- parent programmes.

The development of programmes for mathematics and arithmetic has just started. It goes without saying that these will be in line with the arithmetic readiness of the child thought programme (KWOWED).
The programme takes into account the learning strategies that children from underprivileged social environments use by carefully building up the teaching-learning process, not basing it on incidental out-of-school learning processes. The teaching of the traditional "skill at numbers" will be highly structured. Activity will always support abstract thinking.
The motivation to learn will be increased, and the fear of failure reduced, by finding a starting point in problems that are real to the pupils, by differentiation and by shifting attention from solutions to methods (solving strategies). In this way individual thought and the use of thought-strategies are promoted by learning how to think up and use mental models of complex actions.
The ability to represent abstractions is developed by symbolizing and by learning how to make schematic representations. The logical-verbal aspect is stressed by having pupils explain the solutions they have found and the routines they have used.

The programmes will be based on a new approach, that of a mathematics curriculum for primary schools developed by the Institute for the Development of Mathematics Instruction (IOWO).
In this curriculum an integration of valuable elements from traditional arithmetic and new ideas on how to teach mathematics has been achieved.
Here the stress lies on mathematics as a do-subject, learning mathematics by doing mathematics. It is possible to develop more general qualities by looking at mathematics not as an organized system of knowledge but as a method of dealing with and solving problems.
This activity has two aspects:
- making a problem taken from day-to-day reality into a mathematical problem, by making a schematic respresentation of the problem and using symbols;
- solving the mathematical problem.

The solving of the problem may be limited to performing simple operations. But sometimes the problem may be represented schematically or even generalized. In this way we build up a system that will enable us to deal with like problems. For problems that occur regularly the routine may be put into an algorithm. An example of such an algorithm is the routine of adding-up. In this programme pupils develop algorithms with the help of the concrete representation of numbers in an abacus. Via a process of increasing

abstraction they come to the well-known operations model. In this way pupils remain aware of what they are doing, while at the same time the mathematical method is illustrated.
The programmes will teach the traditional calculation skills as well as the mathmatical approach, which will always start from the level of concrete manipulation.

The implementation programmes are meant to familiarize teachers beforehand with new content and teaching methods. After an initial theoretical survey they will be able to try out certain parts of the programme in class and discuss their experiences.

4.6. entering secondary school

The timetable in section 3 shows that the programme concerned with the transistion from primary to secondary school will not be ready for some time yet. It will deal with giving advice to parents and children when they are to make a choice between different types of secondary education. The programme will also deal with pre-vocational orientation, since the choice of a certain type of secondary school determines, to a great extent, occupational choice.
The completion date of this programme is still far off, so there is plenty of time to take into account future developments such as the possible development of comprehensive education for all 12 to 15/16 year-olds.

4.7. adult education

For some years now the O.S.M. Project has organized Dutch language courses for adults who have had no more than primary education. There is a great demand for such courses. Every school term courses are organized at beginners and at advanced level. In the project area day courses as well as evening courses are provided for both categories of participants.

The course for beginners uses a programme called "Receiving and responding" developed by I.V.I.O. in Lelystad.
Important themes are:
- language as a means of communication;
- intensive reading;
- describing situations;
- writing letters (of application);
- gathering information.

The advanced course uses the "Writing and Spelling" course also developed by I.V.I.O. The O.S.M. Project has developed a short manual to go with this course. Important themes in this programme are:
- practical language use;
- making people sensitive to language use, e.g. to faults of style;
- main points of grammar.

In future these courses will be taught at a new institute that is to take up the complete range of "second chance education" in the city of Rotterdam.

The project occupies itself with adult education because this may contribute to parents taking a greater interest in their childrens' education. We try to recruit course-members mainly from the group of parents whose children go to project schools.

4.8. collaboration with neighbourhood organizations

Many organizations in the child's surroundings are involved in activities that try to promote child development; there are clubhouses and community centres, local projects on city redevelopment and rehabilitation, local "action groups" social case work organizations, etc.
The project maintains contacts with these organizations and works with them as much as possible and where this is useful. Thus together with clubhouse staff we organize homework classes for secondary school puplis 3 to 4 times a week; we also take part in a pre-vocational orientation project and cooperate in Third World Projects, etc.
Neighbourhood organizations also help with adult education by recruiting course-members, and they give us a hand in other matters concerning education, such as trying to get library facilities in our neighbourhoods. (This is how we got a library bus.)
Our participation in city rehabilitation and redevelopment projects mainly deals with the planning of new schools and libraries and the renovation of old ones.

4.9. guidance of parent committees

Parent committee usually set themselves the following tasks:
- helping in class; assisting the teacher by giving instruction to small groups of schildren under the supervision of the teacher;
- making suggestions to improve the way things are done at school, e.g.; the setting of school hours;
- helping the school team with special activities such as school trips and sports events.

In order to realize these goals the parent committee should function well and have a good working relationship with the head of the school and the other members of the school team. The project has disigned a guidance plan to improve the way parent committees are working. This phase-plan aims at making parent committees self-reliant and well able to conduct their own meetings. At the same time it tries to improve the relationship between the parent committees and the school teams.

Phase 1: inventory.
The adviser helps the parent committee and the school team to make an inventory of how the committee works, what it sees as its task and what kind of guidance and advice would be desirable.

Phase 2: reporting.
The adviser reports on the different opinions about the proper task and proper functioning of the parent committee; the parties draw up a task model.

Phase 3: modelling.
The desired model is put into practice. This usually involves the drawing up of house rules and of a workplan and the making fo a reference book with all kinds of useful information and tips.

Phase 4: healthy organization.
In this phase the adviser withdraws; help and advice are only given when either of the parties asks for it, or when both do.

Phase 5: occasional help.
This is not a phase like the earlier ones, for it only becomes effective when one of the parties asks for help or advice because there is a conflict.

There is a guidebook for school advisers with suggestions about possible courses of action for every phase.
The "Phase plan for the guidance of Parent Committees" has been published (in Dutch).

The project has undertaken to help parent committees because it is one of the ways to get parents involved in school affairs. The enthusiasm of committee members may be catching and may get other parents involved in their childrens' school education in onze way or another.

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4.10. technical reading in groups

Technical reading in groups is intented to promote the technical reading skill of pupils in 3rd to 5th grade. Attention is paid to the following aspects:
- attentive reading;
- extending reading span;
- practising the reading of words with difficult combination of letters;
- stepping up reading speed;
- promoting clear and accurate pronunciation;
- correcting individual reading mistakes of frequent occurrence.

This programme has been developed by O.S.M. on the basis of individual progress control. It was published (in Dutch) as 'Technical Reading' and there is a series of slides for teachers instruction to go with it.
Method:
- all pupils take the one-minute Brus-test;
- on the basis of test results pupils are assigned to ability groups of four;
- every level has its own books graded according to degree of difficulty (Flesh-Douma formula);
- parents help the children in the ability groups.

Thanks to this method of working in small groups children get to read a lot.
Another advantage is that the teacher has more time to help along individual pupils who have difficulties in reading.

4.11. reading comprehension on an individual basis

Reading for comprehension on an individual basis is aimed at pupils in 2nd to 5th grade who have adequate technical reading skill. Pupils are meant to alternate working in small groups (see 4.10) and working alone. The general aim of this programme is to improve the child's cognitive processing of text material. We can distinguish two sub-goals:
- extracting meaningful information from a text;
- practising the ability to gather information from reading.

In order to realize these goals it is essential to practise the following skills:
a. Understanding the meaning of words and word groups in their context.
b. Drawing conclusions from textual data.
c. Recognizing central themes in paragraphs and texts.
d. Making logical connections between central themes and supporting details.
e. Recognizing the writer's intentions.
f. Drawing conclusions from textual data in combination with non-textual data.
g. Applying textual data to situations outside the text.

The programme is made up of a number of individual reading cards.
Every tenth card is a test card. There is also a series of listening exercises.
The programme has been published by Malmberg B.V.

4.12. spelling

Originally an ability level course published by Malmberg B.V. was used but it proved to have some disadvantages. That is why we decided te revise the entire course, write an accompanying manual and to add tests and correction cards (all of which have been recorded on cassettes for individual use).

The course is now made up of a great number of task cards, the so-called spelling cards, for use by individual pupils. There are three levels of difficulty. All cards have been made self-correcting, which means that pupils can correct themselves, for the answers to the problems are printed on the back of the cards. After they have worked through a certain number of cards pupils take an individual test. These tests are also recorded on cassettes.
When the test shows that a pupil has mastered the spelling problem concerned, he will be able to go on to the next problem. If not, he will have to repeat a number of cards.
At the beginning of term all pupils take a spelling test. The result of this determines what series a pupil is going to work with.

A series of slides for teacher instruction is being prepared.

4.13. alphabet and dictionary

The course "Alphabet and Dictionary" (developed by O.S.M. and published by Zwijsen B.V.) is a programmed instruction course intended for 10-12 year olds (5th graders).

Volume 1 (chapter 1, 2, 3) deals with the use of the alphabet, which is an essential first step in learning how to use a dictionary.
Volume 2 (chapter 4) teaches pupils how to look up the meaning(s) of a word The latter half of volume 2 and volume 3 deal with the following subjects:
- how to look up abbreviations;
- how to look up syllable stress;
- how to look up the word category to which a word belongs;
- how to find the meaning(s) of a word, taking into account the word category to which it belongs;
- how to find verb forms:
  1. weak, strong, irregular verbs,
  2. past tense of strong or irregular verbs,
  3. participles of strong or irregular verbs (perfect tense),
  4. meaning(s) of a verb,
- plurals of nouns;
- how to find the gender of a noun (which, in the Dutch language, governs the article a possessive pronoun form).

4.14 reading for study

'Reading for Study' is aimed at 6th graders. After the course pupils should be able to:
- read a (non-fictional) text independently;
- pick up from the text the most important information and record this adequately;
- find information (know where to look for it) and work with source material.

An individual pupil will work through a series of 40 different task cards.
The following subjects are dealt with:
- how to make excerpts;
- dictionary and encyclopedia;
- classification;
- how to use an index;
- travelling by train;
- tables and graphs;
- diagrams;
- siso system (i.e. a classification system used in public libraries);
- telephone directory;
- SQ3R-method.

Pupils can correct their own work with the help of a correction book.
The teacher keeps a record of the results.
This supplementary material was developed by the O.S.M. Project. There is also a teachers' manual.

4.15. dramatic expression

Dramatic expression should not only incite children to express themselves createvely, it should also promote social development.

The project has developed its own manual to serve a guideline for teachers.

The objectives we are working towards are:

a. **be free in yourself**
   sub-themes are:
   - safety winthin a group,
   - accepting/respecting others,
   - movement,
   - speech.

b. **empathy**
   understanding others and understanding unfamiliar situations, sub-themes are:
   - concentrating,
   - listening/hearing,
   - watching/seeing,
   - identification and empathy.

c. **social play**
concentrating on people and things outside yourself, sub-themes are:
- accepting/respecting others,
- analysis of situations and finding solutions,
- promoting 'togetherness' and co-operation.

This course is taught by people from the Rotterdam Arts Foundation, but we try to have the drama teacher and the grade teacher alternate in working with a class in the weekly drama-hour.
In due course the Social Development Programme will replace the drama course.

4.16. speech therapy

Children with speech disturbances are helped by the project's speech therapists.
The children come to a speech therapist via their teacher, or they are picked out by the speech therapist who tests all 1st graders on entering primary school.

4.17. programme for children of foreign workers

More and more foreign workers bring their families to our country and settle in the older city areas. In this way the number of foreign children that come to project schools has grown considerably. Most of these children do not have enough Dutch to get along in a Dutch school, and they are not used to the way we run our school either.
The O.S.M. Project and Rotterdam School Advisory Service have combined efforts and are working out educational programmes for foreign children.
The first result is a programme called 'Dutch is fun'. It teaches Dutch to nursery school children in a playful manner. The Rotterdam School Advisory Service has also brought out a series of booklets and slideshows about the cultural background of children from Mediterranean countries (Turkey, North Africa) hoping to promote better understanding of the different ways of life these children are used to.

At the moment we are working on programmes for children in primary school.
They will include step-in tests, reading programmes, writing programmes and programmes on arithmetic. We are also trying to work out ways to help these children when they first come to school (reception programme).

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THE PROJECT ONDERWIJS EN SOCIAAL MILIEU

5. project organization

External organization

The Rotterdam School Advisory Service is responsible for the 'Education and Social Environment Project' (O.S.M.), but the project has its own governing body.
The project is financed by the City of Rotterdam, the Ministery of Education and Sciences and the Foundation for Educational Research (S.V.O.).

Internal Organization (fig. 4)

The project has a number of teams. The educational communuty development team makes visits to parents whose children have socio-emotional problems.
The neighbourhood team organizes courses for adults, homework classes for children in secondary school etc.
The research team develops new programmes and evaluates all the programmes.
The educational team helps and trains the teachers. The clerical staff is in charge of all typing and reproduction work and keeps the books.
Then we have three advisers to help us with research problems and matters of policy. All these activities are co-ordinated by the project management who are also in charge of external contacts.
The Policy and Advice Group (B.A.G.) is the project's main governing body; the project staff deals with the day-to-day running of things. The Service Committee is a kind of employees' participation committee.

Range

The project is placed in several neighbourhoods of the inner city and embraces 21 nursery schools and 24 primary schools, the total current enrolment of which is 4.500. The teachers in these centres number 290.

Fig. 4
internal organization of the education and social environment project rotterdam.